

motive. As we can succor our needy living brethren, so we can both the dead and the living by alms bestowed for them who have gone before.

We may also reach the doors of Purgatory through suffering. Like prayer, it is a means common to all, few escape it, and it remains with ourselves either to murmur against its lessons or to receive them as helps to salvation for ourselves and our departed friends. By participating in its fruits in a proper manner, we may open Heaven to numbers of waiting souls. Alas, how much do we lose by not having the courage to bear our sufferings with fortitude, by not possessing the bravery to offer it as a sacrifice of impetration.

The fourth means is Holy Communion. The plenitude of its effects we know is only produced in those, who personally receive it. Actual and living graces for the obtaining of good things and the averting of evil, the remission of venial faults and of the temporal punishment incurred by them, many gifts and graces which cannot be transferred to another. But through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ we can obtain mercy for the souls in Purgatory by frequent and fervent Holy Communion.

The fifth means is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The blood of Jesus Christ, says St. Bernard, is the real key to Paradise. Its virtue is all—powerful, infinite; a single drop suffices to efface a multitude of faults, to remit an eternity of pains, and Jesus Christ has shed it, to the last drop. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is Calvary renewed, and what can be more efficacious in soothing and abating the flames of Purgatory?

The sixth means, Indulgences, are also of great benefit. They open for us the treasures of the merits of Jesus Christ, of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, thus obtaining for the souls in Purgatory a remission of their pains.

What souls then shall we endeavor to send to Paradise? The answer is, all souls who suffer in Purgatory; all, without exception. Our parents, relations, friends and benefactors should have our first suffrages; then perhaps those, who have caused us grief or mortification, or even those, who have inflicted indignities upon us while on earth. It is of precept to return good for evil, let us show them that we not only forgive them, but that we feel for them and love them.

Do not let us neglect to pray for those whom we have scandalized in some manner, we may be the indirect cause of their sufferings; should we forget them God will not be lenient with us when it is our turn to stand before his tribunal.

Even in this life our charity will find many compensations, many recompenses. The thought of Purgatory, frequently entertained, (and if we practice prayer for the suffering souls we can not fail to think of it often), will in itself be a means of preserving us from innumerable faults. It will inspire us with the spirit of mortification and penance by persuading us to expiate voluntarily in this world what the justice of God will require us to expiate in the other. It will teach us to bear patiently the ills and trials of this life, and to make of them a means of shortening our time of probation in the next. It will revive and keep alive our fervor in the service of God and the love of our neighbor, and make us more careful of our heavenly interests. Finally, it will nourish in us a tender charity for the holy souls in Purgatory. Suffering with them we will labor for their release; and God, who recompenses even a cup of cold water given in His name, will receive and recognize our alms with manifold blessings and rewards. He asks them of us, those poor Souls, let us never forget it.—*Da mihi aminas.*